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REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-4 are pending in the present application. Claims 2-4 is pending in the present application. Claim 1 is rejected. New claims 5, 6, 7 and 8 are added in the present amendment.

RESPONSE TO REJECTIONS

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicants have amended claim 1 to address the Examiner's rejection, and believe the rejection is now overcome.

Claim 1 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Rubin et al. (US 5,981,007). Applicants traverse the rejection.

With respect to the rejection made under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), Applicants note the following. The claimed invention provides a process for making isotropic thermotropic liquid crystal polymer parts. An isotropic article is one that is identical in all directions. The properties are invariant with respect to direction.

In contrast, Rubin et al. provide a planar or laminar morphology. Rubin et al. provides multiaxially oriented structures with planar morphology (Col. 7, lines 29-32). Multiaxial is defined (Col 7, lines 37-56) as being the generic term for those orientations that provides strength to a film in both the machine and transverse directions. Multiaxial as used by Rubin et al. refers to what is occurring in the plane of the film and not perpendicular to the plane of the film. Thus the multiaxially oriented film having a planar morphology is not isotropic; it does not have the same properties along three orthogonal axes. The planar or laminar morphology is described in more detail (Col 4, line 45 to Col 5, line 4; Col 11). The two-dimensional laminar layers are much less thick than the entire film. The layers are estimated to be 0.1 to 1.5 micron thick. These layers are in "series" as shown in Figure 8A with the layers of LCP and thermoplastic polymer

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alternating. Properties perpendicular to the plane of the film are clearly different than those parallel to the plane. Accordingly, the present invention is not anticipated by Rubin et al. Withdrawal of the rejection is proper.

With respect to the rejection made under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), Applicants incorporate by reference the responsive arguments presented immediately above. Applicants also point out the following. The Rubin et al. films were produced by extrusion. Applicants direct the Examiner's attention to the present published application in paragraph [0024], last sentence. Applicants have disclosed that it is important that during formation of the part, the LCP, when molten, flows as little as possible. An extrusion process is not consistent with this teaching. To further clarify, claim 1 has been amended to specifically limit the process to compression molding. In view of the differences in the claimed invention and the disclosure of Rubin et al, Applicants believe that withdrawal of the rejection proper.

Claim 1 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al. (US 6,024,126) in view of Koshal (Manufacturing Engineers Reference Book, 1993) and Baird et al. (Polymer Processing, 1995). Applicants traverse the rejection.

Miller et al. disclose (Col 6, lines 50-55) a method of making a valve member comprising filling a mold with a polymeric resin pieces or powder particulate and compression or injection molding the pieces or particulate to make an integral unit. The present invention uses only powder. The present application [0024] states that a typical method of making the part is by compression molding and compression molding was used in all three Examples. Claim 1 has been amended to limit the process to compression molding.

Further, Miller et al., Koshal and Baird are silent regarding an isotropic part and having an LCP flow as little as possible when molten in order to produce an isotropic part. Baird mentions that compression molding involves much less flow than found in injection molding and other forming processes. However, the recognition that an isotropic part can be produced with a LCP if it flows as little as possible when molten originates with the disclosure of the present invention (Bloom et al.).

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The cited references in combination fail to arrive at each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe request reconsideration of the rejections made against claim 1, and allowance of pending claims 1 and 5, 6, 7 and 8. If anything further is needed to advance prosecution and allowance of the pending claims, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorney using the contact information provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: August 31, 2007